

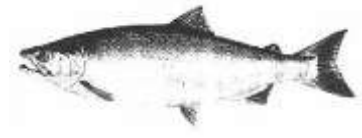
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #52

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, August 12 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. Waters within the Chinook salmon inside closure area will be OPEN during this commercial fishing period. The last day of sonar operation at Miles Lake for the 2013 season was July 27. The cumulative sonar count through July 27 was 1.27 million fish whereas the anticipated inriver passage range for this date is 695,308–1,067,794 fish. For the week ending August 10, the actual Copper River Delta survey index count was 50,875 versus an anticipated range of 24,976–59,034 sockeye salmon. The preliminary harvest estimate for the fishing period that closed Tuesday, August 6 was 724 sockeye, 6,200 pink, and 3,710 coho salmon with 51 deliveries reported. The cumulative Copper River District commercial harvest to date is 1.58 million sockeye salmon and 10,400 coho salmon.

The Copper River District is open to subsistence fishing concurrent with commercial fishing periods until closed at the end of the season. Subsistence permits may be obtained during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.**

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, August 12 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. For the week ending August 10, the actual Bering River District survey index count was 12,650 versus a minimum anticipated range of 4,301–9,462 sockeye salmon. No harvest was reported for the commercial fishing period that closed Tuesday, August 6.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Eshamy District will open to commercial gillnet fishing for a 14-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, August 12. The AGZ will open to SET GILLNET permit holders only during this fishing period. Additionally, the Main Bay Hatchery SHA will open to commercial gillnet fishing for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 13. The AGZ will open to DRIFT GILLNET permit holders only during this fishing period. There was no harvest reported from the period that closed Monday, August 5. Harvest numbers from the period that closed on August 7 are confidential. Cumulative harvest through August 7 was 508,000 sockeye, 213,000 chum, 1,500 coho, and 58,300 pink salmon. Video monitoring of salmon escapement on the Eshamy River is currently operational and run entry into the lagoon and river will be assessed from the camp through Sunday. Future openings will depend on pink salmon stream escapements and assessment of sockeye salmon run entry into Eshamy River.

SEINE FISHERIES: Fishery participants are encouraged to ensure that they have a secure market before harvesting salmon.

VFDA reports 500,000 to 600,000 pink salmon staged at SGH. VFDA's broodstock needs are approximately 346,000 pink salmon. Eggtakes are underway at SGH, with approximately 41% of the final goal completed through August 8.

PWSAC completed its pink salmon cost recovery program on July 31, and reports a current cumulative mid-range hatchery escapement estimate of approximately 283,000 pink salmon at AFK, CCH, and WNH. Based on recent sex ratio sampling results for the Coghill, Northern, and Southwestern districts, PWSAC expects a cumulative hatchery escapement in excess of 500,000 pink salmon. PWSAC has provided recommendations for area restrictions in the coming days to allow for increased escapement at AFK, CCH and WNH.

ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from the Northern District on August 5 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 39% female. ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from the Coghill District on August 5 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 48% female. ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from the Southwestern District on August 5 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 46% female. ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from the Southwestern District on August 7 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of

48% female. ADF&G sampling of pink salmon harvested in the Eastern, Coghill, and Southwestern districts on July 30 resulted in an average weight of approximately 2.8 pounds per fish. Final harvest numbers for the August 8 fishery in Prince William Sound are unavailable at the time of this announcement; however, it is estimated that at least 7.78 million pink salmon were harvested from August 6 through August 8 using this average weight. Cumulative pink salmon harvest totals for Prince William Sound through August 8 include approximately 1.8 million VFDA cost recovery fish, 1.7 million PWSAC cost recovery fish, and an estimated 57.1 million CPF fish.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the July 30 Eastern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 43% hatchery and 57% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 158,000 pink salmon. Of the estimated 212,000 hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 88% SGH and 12% WNH.

Preliminary ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the August 2 Northern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 80% hatchery and 20% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 164,000 pink salmon. All of the estimated 655,000 hatchery fish harvested on this date were CCH fish according to this preliminary sample.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the August 5 Southwestern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 80% hatchery and 20% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 229,000 pink salmon. Of the estimated 917,000 hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 62% AFK, 27% WNH, and 11% CCH.

COGHILL DISTRICT: Waters of the Coghill District, **excluding the WNH SHA**, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for a 14-hour fishing period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 10.

Waters of the Coghill District, **excluding the WNH SHA and THA**, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 11, and Monday, August 12. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Coghill District CPFs include 1.41 million on August 5; 738,000 on August 6; 390,000 on August 7. There were 235 purse seine and 576 gillnet deliveries reported for these periods.

EASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Eastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 10; Sunday, August 11; and Monday, August 12. Waters of Port Valdez east of 146° 23.00' W Long., will be closed to commercial fishing during these periods. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Eastern District CPFs include 97,500 on August 5, with 9 deliveries, and 80,900 on August 6, with 9 deliveries. Pink salmon harvest numbers for the August 7 Eastern District CPF are confidential.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: Waters of the Montague District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 10; Sunday, August 11; and Monday, August 12. There were no harvests reported for the August 5 through August 7 Montague District CPFs.

NORTHERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the CCH SHA and THA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 10; Sunday, August 11; and Monday, August 12. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Northern District CPFs include 737,000 on August 5, with 56 deliveries; 1.02 million on August 6, with 71 deliveries; 682,000 on August 7, with 75 deliveries.

NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 10; Sunday, August 11; and Monday, August 12. There were no harvests reported for the August 5 through August 7 Northwestern District CPFs.

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 10; Sunday, August 11; and Monday, August 12. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Southeastern District CPFs include 141,000 on August 5, with 14 deliveries, and 61,300 on August 6, with 5 deliveries. There were no harvests reported for the August 7 Southeastern District CPF.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding the AFK SHA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 10, and Sunday, August 11.

Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding the AFK Hatchery SHA and THA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour fishing period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, August 12. **Waters north of the latitude of Squire Point and west of the longitude of Herring Point will be CLOSED to commercial fishing during the AUGUST 12 period. These waters are being closed to allow for passage of Eshamy Lake sockeye salmon.** Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Southwestern District CPFs include 1.05 million on August 5, with 82 deliveries; 1.05 million on August 6, with 81 deliveries; 1.33 million on August 7, with 74 deliveries.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Monday, August 12.

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.**

Please reference http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.